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November 30, 1967

No. 437

THE WEEK IN THE COMMUNITY

November 20 - November 26, 1967

THE COMMON MARKET

A Smaller Pound - A Bigger Europe?

From our Brussels Correspondent

European observers have been faced with quite a poser since the British Government announced its decision to devalue sterling: the time, the measures, the circumstances surrounding the move seemed to hold much promise for Britain's EEC membership bid, be it directly or indirectly - but nobody can say for certain just how the British cause has been advanced. The first difficulty in framing an opinion stems from the fact that all must allow a few weeks now for the British economy to settle down, before seeking in earnest any real signs of improvement there. Next, there is the usual business of subtle distinction: the answer an expert would give to any question linking devaluation with candidature for the EEC would depend almost entirely on the phrasing of the query. Lastly, there is the abiding presence of the French head of state, and at this point in time, General de Gaulle's precise standpoint on the question is still unknown (this item is dated Brussels, Saturday November 25 - for de Gaulle's press conference, see below). All in all, the task of forecasting developments in the Community has never been quite so fraught with niceties of interpretation, nor have two imponderable factors of this magnitude weighed quite so heavily upon it before. Nevertheless, we must attempt to show "which way the cat will jump..."

Devaluation and the Six: Only by going straight to the heart of the matter can we get any sort of picture, and the first thing to emerge was the solidarity of the Six, which came through the test unscathed: Community and governmental machinery ran smoothly all the time, during the crisis week-end and even afterwards. The decisions taken were no less positive, and the Six's unwavering adhesion to the principle of maintaining parity with their own currencies probably did as much as anything to ensure that the sterling devaluation was only of medium scale. Moreover, the solidarity shown by the Six probably went an appreciable distance beyond whatever formal undertakings they had previously made to one another. This seeming upswing in "Europeanism" probably received its most dramatic demonstration in the fact that M. Debre, who is no lover of supranational institutions, invited the Commission to the (strictly intergovernmental) conference of Finance ministers on November 19 in Paris. It is worth considering this fact in the context of the foreign ministers' failure, on June 5, to do so much as come together at a meeting planned long in advance, and at as critical a time as the opening of hostilities between Israel and her Arab neighbours.

"Together we Stand": It may have been little more than a general sense of apprehension that set off this pattern of behaviour, the Six closing their ranks for safety, but there seems little doubt that they will go on this way for some weeks to come. Professor Raymond Barre, who assumed Robert Marjolin's portfolio for economic affairs in the

Commission, stressed more than once that vigilance had to be the Community's watchword, since the various economies in the Common Market were not yet strong enough to fend off all attacks, and that the dollar itself, in the weeks to come, is likely to have a rough passage (the run on gold soon bore him out on this point). There seems to be room for optimism on the question of the common economic policy, which will be up for consideration by the ministers as usual in January. Thus as far as the Six are concerned, recent developments may well have served them in good stead, by driving them further along the road towards one of the most important aspects of their integrational programme: monetary union.

One of the main observations one can make about the Community at this stage, then, is that the British candidature issue seems to have hardened each member in its determination to avoid crisis within the Community at all costs. This does not in itself mean that the Five are playing the game France's way, for the stronger the party, the better is the chance of the majority swinging things their way. However, solidarity is not everything, and it is a matter now of just how good a job the Five can make of putting things across to France - soundness and persuasiveness being the prime virtues.

Pressure on France? Having seen this side of the situation, one is tempted to ask whether Willy Brandt set the cat among the pigeons when on November 20 at the Council meeting he proposed that the Rey Commission should amplify the chapter in its report on enlargement of the Community, dealing with British monetary problems, in consultation with representatives from London. On the face of it, the West German foreign minister may have been attempting to use unforeseen circumstances to put paid to French opposition to the opening of talks with London, but if this was his motive, then the device was ill contrived and so badly handled that the most it could achieve was a protracted debate on procedure that would inevitably turn sour. What is more, Herr Brandt's move betrayed the whole approach adopted by the Five, which was to get the discussion of fundamentals (based on the Commission's report) over and done with, and come on to a decision on the opening of talks with Britain by mid-December. This side of the matter progressed not one iota on November 20, and the failure of the German move was soon followed by the break-up of the meeting. In the end it was agreed that M. Rey would make an oral report on the devaluation of the pound on December 11, having consulted in the meantime with the British authorities, as is his prerogative (he may, for instance, choose to consult with Her Majesty's ambassador to the Communities). The debate on the basic issues, however, will continue on December 18 and 19, and will be followed by discussion of subsequent procedure, i.e., in theory at least, discussions on negotiations - we say "in theory" because there is much scepticism still in Brussels and elsewhere about this particular point.

Herr Brandt reaped a meagre harvest indeed, if he was seeking to call anyone's bluff, but it is far more likely that he was bent on something quite different - and the most likely plan, just one week before de Gaulle's press conference, was to demonstrate to France that Bonn's conciliatory mood could be tried too much. This seemed to be confirmed by Herr Brandt's letter to M. Couve de Murville on November 23, in which he proposed bilateral discussion of the British problem in mid-December,

within the scope of talks provided for in the Franco-German friendship treaty. In a way, this document was a reminder to France that Franco-German friendship should not always be a one-sided affair. Another possibility was that Herr Brandt was attempting to stave off any discussion of the British economy, only one day after devaluation, and on the eve of the reopening of the London exchange market. On such a day there was a severe risk of the French foreign minister recapitulating on a theme already developed by his colleague Debre, which was that devaluation alone would not suffice to restore the economic situation of Britain, since the root of the problem was the reserve role of sterling. Interpreted in this way, Herr Brandt was simply trying to save Mr. Wilson any further trials and tribulations in what was already a crisis situation.

France Toes the Line: For his part, M. Couve de Murville was probably equally content to defer the moment of truth. And moreover he joined with his colleagues in the "declaration of solidarity" adopted by the Council, and which welcomed "all the courageous measures (adopted in London) for the restoration of the British balance of payments, and the return to equilibrium of the country's economy". This document went on to say, "The decision by member countries' governments to maintain their own parity rates, and to joint in international efforts to support sterling, bears witness at once to the Six's own solidarity, their common attitude to Britain and their willingness to co-operate in international monetary affairs". This was all that the French representative was prepared to go along with, and he drew the line at the opening of a dialogue between the Commission and London, which might well have done something to restore the jaded image of the Labour Government. France's sense of solidarity does not stretch to handing out bouquets: it stays strictly inside that which serves the national interest, granted that this must frequently bend to the needs of western interdependence.

We have not only witnessed this trait in Brussels: France's partners have shown themselves far more circumspect than she in such matters as the Central Banks' loan to Britain, or again in their gold pool dealings. For all this, however, they have not changed in their anxiety to avoid a Community crisis, such as might be precipitated by any attempt to force the hand of Paris, particularly as she has done her international duty, if only "working to rule" (on this point, the accusations that de Gaulle appears to have made, that there is some sort of Machiavellian complicity between the pound and the dollar, met with strong reproof on the Continent: anyway, it is maintained, France could "threaten" the reserve currencies to further orders, if she wished - it would achieve nothing if their credit was not undermined by many other factors). In the final analysis, however, one can only conclude that France is now even better placed in her controversy with the Five.

Britain on Trial: This position will probably be even further strengthened if, before the middle of December, the British Government has failed to achieve any marked improvement in the country's economic and political situation. On this score, observers in the Community are saying that Britain's latest economic and financial measures may justly be expected to effect considerable improvements in the situation of the country, especially as the number of countries that have made parallel devaluations is

relatively few, and this should give a real boost to exports (see "Devaluation" - white pages). Far more concern on the Continent is in fact being occasioned by what appears to be the prevailing political climate in Britain, for although Mr. Wilson seems to have the solid backing of both Party and unions, such factors as the results of the latest by-elections seem to threaten quite a severe political crisis. While doubts like these are in peoples' minds, even those who favour the early opening of negotiations with Britain are likely to waver a little.

Racing against the Calendar: This begs the question: will things be sufficiently restored in Britain by mid-December for the Five to be able to make out a strong case to M. Couve de Murville? Truth to tell, there is precious little time, to achieve as fundamental a thing as an economic "clean bill of health" for Britain. Indeed, if near miracles should be worked in the meantime, M. Couve de Murville will still be able to fall back on his argument that the British balance of payments problem will never be solved until sterling relinquishes its international role - not to mention the country as such (for as one French commentator said: "After all, the Vth Republic did not only devalue the franc, it also renounced the imperial burden"). The fact that this argument is bound to be thrown in should "give us pause", especially as M. Couve de Murville is almost certain to tax his colleagues with this case: "Should there be a British balance of payments crisis, one which seems to justify their calling upon us for assistance, we may expect London to ask first to have the agricultural finance regulations relaxed. Supposing this happened - would you be prepared to atone for the shortcomings of our British friends?"

Developments Soon: So, at the end of November 1967, the Community is by no means out of the wood on the question of Britain's candidature - but the stalemate cannot last much longer, and we may reasonably expect the question to be settled, one way or another, by January or February at the latest. Nothing short of a bolt from the blue can make the end a downright refusal to negotiate (despite utterances by the French president - see below), but the nature and the content of these talks remain unknown, and the Six can haggle over this side of the question for some time yet. Nevertheless, circumstances seem to be driving the Community ever closer to the point where the Rey Commission will receive a mandate for exploratory talks, and one of the quotes of the week came from a French diplomat on November 20: "In our view, the basic error behind Willy Brandt's remarks is that he made them too soon."

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French Government has pointed out that there is a threat to the consumer durables sector, which is now undergoing moves towards mergers and rationalisation. If some temporary protection is not instituted, the whole sector may disappear. This is the basis for Paris's request for an authorisation to introduce imports quotas based on the level of those for the first half of 1966, to apply to 1968 and 1969. However, such a move would bring a 33% fall in Italian sales of consumer durables to France.

LABOUR

The First European Job Description

The Commission has just proposed that the EEC Council should recommend member states to adopt a Community list, in which will be aligned the basic qualifications demanded for the various recognised levels of training, in this first case for the trade of medium-grade turner,

This proposal stems from the adoption by the Council in 1963 of the General Principles for a common policy on vocational training.

The importance of this recommendation is that the "list" to be issued would in fact be the first European job description as such, giving a formal schedule of the various qualifications defining levels of ability at this trade throughout the Community. This would mean that men trained to such a job description would be of completely matching competence in any member country, and could thus safely enjoy absolute freedom of movement within their trade throughout the Community.

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E.I.B.

The European Investment Bank will issue bonds in Italy for a total value of Lire 15,000 million. The bonds will be offered to the public from November 27, 1967, by a syndicate of Italian banks headed by Mediobanca. They will bear interest at the rate of 6% per annum and will be offered at 97%.

The 20-year bonds are redeemable at par from December 1, 1971, in 17 annuities. The European Investment Bank will, however, have the option of redeeming by anticipation all or part of the bonds, at par, from December 1, 1976.

This is the Bank's fourth public bond issue in Italy; the proceeds from the sale of bonds will be used by the Bank for its general lending operations.

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E.F.T.A.

Trade Figures for the First Nine Months of 1967

The latest EFTA trade figures to be published, those for the first nine months of this year, show some slackening in the trends that became established in the first half of the year, which is the first in which EFTA manufactures have been completely free of duties and quotas. Up to the end of June (see No 425), intra-EFTA trade had shown the dramatic upsurge of 14.4% over the same period for 1965, and total imports and exports had increased by 6.2 and 7.7% respectively. These ratios,

for the full nine months, have now fallen to 10.5, 5.0 and 5.5% respectively, as is shown in the table below. Overall, the predominant feature remains the fact that trade within EFTA continues to expand more rapidly than that with third countries, as might be expected.

EFTA TRADE: JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 1967 (\$ millions and % change over same period in 1966)								
	EEC		USA		REST		TOTAL	
Imports	8,446	+3.5*	2,762	+5.0	10,246	+3.0	27,827	+5.0 +1.2+
Exports	5,566	-2.0	2,192	same	9,193	+9.0	22,942	+5.5 -0.5

* compared with 9.4% annual average for 1959-66

+ compared with rate of change for second quarter of 1967

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FRANCE

Smoke without Fire?

It's all been said before, yet pressmen and observers in unprecedented numbers gathered in the Elysee Palace on November 27 once again to imbibe the familiar oratory of President de Gaulle, to come away and compare notes, to put this or that fine edge on what was said; will Britain's devaluation have swayed him, what is he going to say about association this time, and so on. The British press paints a black picture of the United Kingdom's Common Market prospects, and the cry once more goes up that "it's 'no' again".

The usual topic-by-topic, word-by-word analysis of the General's press conference has now been given its priority treatment, and the fact once more revealed that his stand world affairs, on gold, on sterling, on Britain's balance of payments, on her world role, on her "incompatibility" with the Six remains unaltered: not a word was unexpected, yet all has again come under the microscope, and the General's choice of analogy, the sternness of the line taken, are all weighed in the balance.

Has such a fine toothcomb treatment not now become, by and large, irrelevant? The General's standpoint is surely the most predictable feature of the Community situation today, and to dwell on this or that detail of his approach to the various issues avails us nothing - unless it is to measure the dramatic, psychological value of his press conferences. The very timing of this latest gathering of the "ears of Europe" bears this out - after the anticipated non-progress of the first Council meetings on the Commission's enlargement report, after (fortuitously after?) the announcement of sterling devaluation, and before the last Council meetings scheduled for 1967 - when France is to assume the presidency in the new year.

The de Gaulle press conference system is clearly a deployment of the facilities of the mass-media age, the approach and the style are patently aimed at achieving the widest possible effect, and yet there still seems to be a compulsion amongst observers to take the cold, analytical approach to the matter; even though the bald details of the presidential speech vary but little, and rarely multiply.

The real news value of the press conference is slight, and one can therefore only assume that its true function is for the General, as "vox populi" to couch in his own, inimitable phrases the stand taken by France on all major issues. If this is the case, especially in the context of the Common Market system, then even his most colourful harangue loses much of its substance, for as far as the EEC is concerned the whole drama must be acted out in Brussels, under the rules ordained in the Rome Treaty. It is here that quiet perseverance can loom as large and as powerful as the voice of any head of state, because here the weapons are systematised: Article 237 of the Rome Treaty is an international device, recognised by the Six and the candidate countries, attested, and, to use a Gaullist phrase, immutable. As far as British candidature is concerned, this is the real stuff of the debate, and overriding all presidential utterances comes the fact that there is absolutely nothing in the Treaty of Rome to preclude the opening of negotiations with Britain: this brings us back to de Gaulle's speech, and one of the key factors therein that is worthy of examination: the non-sequitur...

In Monday's speech, the General observed that (a) if Britain has already accepted all the terms of the Rome Treaty and subsequent EEC legislation, then there can be nothing to negotiate, and (b) that to enter into negotiations at this stage would spell doom for the Community. A paradox like this brings us to the idea that heads this article: if Brussels is truly the theatre for the "enlargement" war, then that is where any French fire must break out, and by the same token, the inconsistencies in the General's speech can only be looked on as a smokescreen, a way of using publicity to predispose observers as to the final issue of the controversy, which in fact can only be worked out coldly, logically and constitutionally. What in fact has to be negotiated is what de Gaulle himself lays such emphasis upon - the non-destruction of the Community: it is the business of making Britain compatible with the Community (adherence to the Rome Treaty principle now being assumed) and not of asserting her incompatibility that must form the substance of future talks.

This, and not the "crying wolf" that seems to follow every Elysee press conference, is what really matters at this juncture in the Community's history: to admit defeat because of a swingeing speech from the head of one member state of the Community is to confess a lack of faith in the Community system as such, and any candidate doing this would only be confessing the duplicity of its action in seeking membership.

One is not attempting here to show who is right and who is wrong in the present manoeuvres: accusations of intransigence achieve no more nor less than assertions of Britain's unsuitability for EEC membership. For Mr. Jay to suggest that France has a nuisance value in Western European affairs tantamount to that of

Germany in the thirties (as he did on BBC television on November 27) is as unconstructive as de Gaulle's likening of Britain's relationship with the EEC to a five-act play (with the sinse of finality that this immediately instils in French - and other - minds). In the final analysis, Britain's bid for membership will be resolved in Brussels, constitutionally. Periods of complete stagnation may yet come, still more dramatic posturing may be indulged in by the protagonists in the struggle, but few people can now seriously believe that any of the member states of the EEC, still less the people they represent, will tolerate the destruction of the Community, over what, or (to concede a point) very soon will be a just bid for entry.

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Reactions throughout the Common Market to General de Gaulle's press conference have been largely critical, as far as the press is concerned, whilst the Governments of the Six have adopted a rather more prudent attitude in public. There can, however, be little doubt that the Five will consult together to see if they can take a common line when the Council of Ministers meets in December, and although there may be strong talk, the majority of observers feel it is unlikely that any sudden and dramatic changes will occur.

It is already known that the Benelux countries, during their meeting in The Hague on Wednesday will discuss the questions raised by General de Gaulle's statement. The unofficial reaction from Community circles is that no one member of the Common Market has the right to make the others follow its wishes, for decisions must be taken on a joint basis. Addressing the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Tuesday afternoon, the Commission's President, M. Jean Rey, said they had never thought that Britain's economic situation would prevent her from joining as a full member, and he repeated the verdict of the Commission that negotiations should begin with London.

BRUSSELS

Last Friday a motion before the Belgian Parliament calling for the opening of negotiations for full membership of the Common Market for the Four was approved virtually unanimously by all three parties, and this prepared a cool reception for de Gaulle. His attitude to the Common Market itself as well as to the question of British entry was far from appreciated. The attitude of the press can be summed up in two sentences. Firstly it was the General who was wrecking the hopes of a stronger Europe by threatening to break up the EEC. Secondly it was altogether presumptuous for "a head of State, so jealous of his own independence" to carry on in such a manner.

The Belgian Government on November 28 proposed that there should be a meeting of the Five to discuss the "new and very serious elements in the dossier of Britain's candidature".

BONN

The West German Foreign Ministry indicated that Bonn's attitude to an enlarged Community remained unchanged, and that Britain and other countries still should become members of the EEC, although this should not threaten the break-up of the Community. Chancellor Kiesinger, who arrived back from a tour of the Far East on Tuesday, held a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday to discuss the problems created by the General's press conference. The feeling amongst political observers is that the French President has raised difficulties which in fact are quite capable of being solved during negotiations, and it is not thought likely that the EEC would be destroyed by British entry. There are indications that in their role as "honest brokers" the West Germans intend to make proposals for some form of transitional membership, which would be more than simple association (ruled out by Britain on both political and economic grounds).

During the Strasbourg meeting of the European Parliament attended by M. Rey, the West German Economics Minister Professor Schiller said that through devaluing the pound, Britain had "paid an essential part of the price of entry". He also added that maybe London should consider the idea of becoming a member by stages.

The press is less kind. The Bonn "General Anzeiger" writes that "Bonn's concessions have not borne fruit. It is plain that France has absolutely no wish to enter into negotiations over the entry of Britain into the Common Market. The suggestions made for other forms of links with the British are no more than a smoke-screen". The "Frankfurter Allgemeine" considers that the General has hardened his attitude and continues to oppose any links with Britain; it is not, however, disappointed, since the French President's statement was to be expected. "Die Welt" says that the General has clearly exposed his weakness by continuing to devote his efforts to strengthen France alone, at a time when states are willing to work together.

THE HAGUE

Reaction from the Dutch Government, Britain's strongest supporter within the Community, was studied, whilst the press thought that the French President was continuing along his traditional lines of attacking the Anglo-Saxon menace in all its different forms. The Dutch Foreign Minister, Dr. Joseph Luns, who will be visiting London on December 5, said that he thought the General's remarks did not measure up to the facts. He did not think that the moment of truth had yet arrived, but it might do so during the coming months, or "even weeks".

ROME

The official diplomatic reaction to the press conference was to reserve judgement, until "the full text had been studied", but reactions amongst the republican opposition and the socialists, particularly as expressed in such newspapers as the "Voce Repubblicana", showed as high a degree of acrimony as can have been exhibited

by the most violently anti-Common Market factions in Britain. Italian support for Britain's candidature was again expressed, and it was generally reiterated that Brussels is and must be the place where the issue will finally be resolved. At one extreme, the republican press saw de Gaulle as one of the men of dominating ambition that seems to arise three or four times in a century and succeeds only in disintegrating that which he seeks to control and unify - comparison with Hitler and use of as strong a word as "jackal" were not baulked at. At the other extreme, "Corriere della Sera" took a very pessimistic line, and suggested that further Council discussion in Brussels would now be futile: while de Gaulle stands, the cause is hopeless. The consensus, however, seems to be that the only line to follow is that of sustained pressing for negotiations through the recognised channels.

FRANCE

It was the manner of the President's conference and the way in which he expressed his opinions on international and domestic affairs which has caused some of the strongest reactions in France, where people, probably more than those living outside, have heard a great deal of it all before. His attitude to Israel and Canada, as well as to the question of British entry was criticised. The independent paper "Le Monde", in a leading article by its editor, says "that there is a certain contradiction in pushing the British Isles back into the Atlantic by refusing to start talks which would help their evolution, by using the Commission's report but ignoring its conclusions - that negotiations should begin". Reactions from French industry to the President's apparent veto of British entry are careful, but in private they probably support his action since the country is already having to face up to the effects of the free movement of goods within the EEC next July, and the Kennedy Round cuts.

BRITAIN & THE EEC

Devaluation: The Six React

Britain's decision to devalue the pound on the evening of Saturday November 18 was more than half-expected by the great majority of people after a week of hectic activity on the financial markets of the world largely due to the British Government's unwillingness to confirm or deny that she was trying to get another massive loan to tide the pound over yet another crisis. The idea of devaluation had been suggested on numerous occasions beforehand, but those who had done so were criticised by those in authority, for helping to undermine the all-important need for confidence in sterling. The decision was taken after consultation with the other main countries involved and was accompanied by a loan. However it will be some time before its full effects are felt and there certainly seems to be a need for strict measures to ensure its success.

Reactions in general from the Common Market countries have been favourable towards Britain's move and most think that it has removed one difficulty facing Britain's Common Market bid. The fact that the French President does not think it worthwhile starting negotiations for the time being, does not alter the fact that London may have taken a decision which in the long run will make her stronger vis-a-vis any Common Market negotiations.

The table below gives trade between Britain and the Six countries of the European Community as a percentage of the total value for both exports and imports.

TRADE BETWEEN THE SIX AND BRITAIN (as % of total value)				
	EXPORTS		IMPORTS	
	1965	1966	1965	1966
Bleu	4.8	4.8	7.6	7.5
France	5.0	4.5	5.0	5.0
Italy	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7
Netherlands	8.7	8.2	6.5	6.1
West Germany	3.9	3.9	4.5	4.3

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FRANCE

The announcement of Britain's decision to devalue came as no surprise to Paris for the British Government had consulted with her as with other capitals to see what amount would be acceptable and whether or not France might devalue. Even at this moment, the French Government seems to have kept the pressure on Britain by refusing to say whether or not she would follow suit.

For a considerable period influential French circles had been hinting that devaluation of the pound was a necessary step if Britain was to enter the Common Market - a view accepted by a number of persons in Britain itself - and at the Luxembourg Council of Ministers meeting before devaluation actually occurred the French Foreign Minister had strongly hinted at the need for such a step. Another important French supporter of this view was M. Jacques Rueff, who assists the President on financial matters, and during the weekend before devaluation he had repeated that it was desirable for Britain to take the same measures as those France had had the courage to take in 1958, and which had made her able to stand the strain of joining the EEC.

After devaluation had taken place the French Finance Minister M. Debre, described the decision as a courageous one, but said that it needed to be backed by appropriate measures for success, and that six months would be needed to see whether it was working. He also said that devaluation in no way changed the fundamental issues connected with Britain's application to join the EEC. M. Rueff took a similar line and said that devaluation "showed the vulnerability of reserve currencies. It is confirmation of the progressive decline of these". Events during the past week have tended to show how little the French Government has done to dampen down any speculation arising out of the rush for gold. According to M. Rueff the reserve currency role of the pound was still an obstacle to British entry into the Common Market, which he thought was "very desirable".

The Cost to France: However the reaction of French industrial circles has been tinged with rather less glee than that of their governmental counterparts. French industry is already fighting hard and worried by the removal of barriers to the free movement of goods in July 1968 - a "buy French" campaign based on the Gallic cock has been launched to awaken people - and a governmental survey has shown that in a number of sectors British products were already competitive.

British exports to France should rise, whilst French exports across the Channel, especially luxury products, are likely to fall, and tourism will also be hard hit by devaluation. Furthermore, some observers in France fear that countries who already export in considerable quantities to Britain but who have not devalued will have to turn to other markets such as France herself.

Last year Britain took around £200 million in French exports. She accounted for 2.6% of French car exports and devaluation will be a nuisance, as British cars will be more competitive in France - reductions of up to 10% have been announced already by some makers, whilst French cars will be more expensive in Britain. However, the French car industry believes that the abolition of the export rebate, and higher corporation taxes will reduce some of the advantages to British firms. The textile sector expects even stiffer competition over artificial and synthetic materials and that exports to Britain (3%) will drop. A 60% decline in cotton exports and a rise of around 150% in imports have been forecast.

The French electrical and electronic industries, as well as the engineering sector expect stronger competition than before in an area where Britain was already well placed as regards both the domestic market and exports to third countries. In the case of the former, French imports are worth over double their exports, and the value of British exports of engineering products to France is one and a half times the figure of trade in the opposite direction. It is also thought that exports by the French chemical industry to Britain, which in 1966 fell by 5.9%, compared with 1965 may drop slightly. Imports by Britain of wine, brandy and champagne will fall off, and this will be a serious blow to the French alcoholic drinks industry, since Britain takes 25% of French brandy production and is the leading market (5,489,000 bottles in 1966) for champagne.

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WEST GERMANY

"A healthy Englishman is better for us - and a fortiori for the Community - than a sick one". Thus ran the general drift of opinion in German industrial circles following Saturday's devaluation. After an initial shock at devaluation, especially in Frankfurt, where the bankers saw the move in terms of a costly mistake, of little long term value, sentiment began to swing in favour of devaluation.

The official German government statement welcomed the move and called it "a bold step". Bonn hoped that it would "contribute to the recovery of Britain's balance of payments and to a stable development of world trade". But still the German industrialist was not convinced. There remained in the air a feeling of scepticism - that devaluation was not really the answer to the basic 'English malaise'. Many German bankers feared that devaluation would merely precipitate a wave of inflation, stressing the rise in the cost of imports and playing down any advantage to British exporters. Monday's editorial in "Die Welt" stressed this point, saying that exports might become cheaper and thereby be stimulated, but imports would become more expensive and this "could choke the country". The editorial went on to ask whether the measure could succeed in a country such as England, where the economy was so orientated towards imports. Die Welt argued that devaluation did not get at the root cause of the English malaise, which was the basic structural weakness of the British economy. Instead of dealing with the source of the trouble, devaluation had merely cured the symptoms. Germany would have to wait for a while to see whether Britain would profitably use the breathing space afforded by devaluation or whether she would merely squander it. Germany regarded devaluation not as a universal remedy for all Britain's ills, but as only the beginning of a long-overdue rationalisation of the British economic infrastructure.

With regard to German trade with Britain, the Federal Republic was concerned, but was not panicking. Industry thought that devaluation would not seriously affect the German economy as a whole, even at this time, when export performance was of particular significance, following the fall-off in home demand.

During the last few months, however, German exporters have had to grant quite considerable price concessions, partly to meet competition from Britain; devaluation would further aggravate Germany's competitive position.

The industries that will be most affected by devaluation are the motor, machine tools, ship-building, chemical, and electrical and electronics sectors. The German motor car industry is especially export orientated, and so will obviously be hit; machine tools, where Britain and Germany have always been keen competitors, will also be an easier market for Britain. Ship-building and shipping are bound to suffer; the former will undoubtedly lose sales to both Britain and Denmark and to third countries, especially in the field of ship repairs. Shipping firms will feel the pinch severely since their freight rates are for the most part calculated in sterling. According to "Die Welt", shipowners "have for a long time regarded devaluation as a nightmare". Shipowners therefore stand to lose about DM 1.6 per freight tons carried, where the shilling rate is used. The loss will be particularly severe where the charter is for a long period.

It appears that at least 11% of German trade will be affected by the devaluation move, but this will not necessarily be all to the disadvantage of Germany. Britain is the fourth biggest exporter to Germany, after the United States, France, the Netherlands whereas she is the fifth biggest importer of German goods. 60% of British exports to Germany are, however, re-exports such as tea, which come as raw materials from countries that have not devalued, which means that Britain will have to pay 14.3% extra for these items, before re-exporting them.

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ITALY

The announcement of the devaluation of the pound was well received in Italy by official circles. The Treasury Minister, Signor Emilio Colombo, said that "it was our considered conviction, shared by our partners in the European Economic Community, that the size of the devaluation excludes any modification of the exchange rate between Community currencies and the United States dollar". The new rate of exchange is Lire 1,500 instead of Lire 1,700 to the pound. However the increase in Bank Rate to 8% is causing a certain amount of concern, since there has been an outflow of capital since the start of the year with higher interest rates available outside.

Products likely to be affected both on the Italian home market and outside through competition are engineering goods, chemicals, plastics, electronics, textiles and motor vehicles. The lowering of tariff barriers following implementation of the Kennedy Round will make competition even stronger.

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NETHERLANDS

There was a short emergency session of the Dutch Cabinet on the Saturday night, and it was decided that the country would not follow the British example and devalue her currency and the exchange rate is now Fl 8.688 to the pound. It was officially stated that sterling devaluation was "unavoidable". However, although the move would make Britain more competitive in world markets with the Netherlands, especially in shipping, it was a necessary measure to ensure a return to health for the British economy. The Dutch Government thought that the measures taken to restrict credit and the incomes policy would bear fruit.

However business circles considered it unfortunate that devaluation had had to take place under pressure, although there were by now few other alternatives for Mr. Wilson. As in other countries, stress was laid upon the need for the measures accompanying devaluation, especially those aimed at reshaping the country's economic and industrial structure, to be effective and put into action soon. If this was not done, the whole move might be wasted.

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BELGIUM

After a special session of the Belgian Cabinet it was stated by the Prime Minister, M. Paul Vanden Boeynants, that the position of the Belgian franc would not be changed as a result of the devaluation of the pound. He pointed out that his country's currency was in a strong position, since its reserves stood at Bf 90,000 million with 75,000 million in gold. The Governor of the Belgian National Bank, M. Hubert Ansiaux, said that it was "the first time a devaluation had been preceded by so much international consultation, and so much care taken to avoid international monetary disturbances." He thought that the amount of the devaluation was limited enough for other countries to support its effects, whilst leaving the main advantages to Britain.

The Belgian textile, diamond and steel industries may be expected to be hit as a result of the British move, whilst exports to Belgium of chemicals, plastics, cars, and industrial diamonds will benefit. Britain may be well placed to take advantage of her stronger position (already Belgium's fifth customer) in a market that is already strongly competitive, but well disposed to British goods.

November 30, 1967

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AEROSPACE

** The various moves made in West Germany in the last few years towards reshaping the country's aircraft industry are being finalised as far as two firms in the "Southern Group" are concerned: BOLKOW GmbH, Ottobrunn b. Munich (see No 415) and MESSERSCHMIDT AG, Augsburg (see No 426). A joint company, with the status of a limited liability company is being set up, which will control the various manufacturing assets contributed by its two founders.

1) From the former; Bölkow-Apparatebau GmbH, Nabern über Plochingen (wholly-owned - capital DM 4 million); Waggon & Maschinenbau AG, Donauwörth (more than a 50% subsidiary - capital DM 10 million); and Siebelwerke ATG GmbH, Donauwörth (wholly-owned subsidiary of the previous company - capital DM 6.3 million).

2) From Messerschmidt: Flugzeug Union GmbH, Munich (wholly-owned - capital DM 1 million); Junkers Flugzeug- & Motorenwerke AG, Munich (an 80/20 subsidiary with the previous company - capital DM 5 million). At a later date the new company will take over Entwicklungsring Süd GmbH, Munich (capital DM 1.5 million) whose shareholders are Messerschmidt (50%), Bölkow (25%) and Siebelwerke ATG (25%).

The estimated value of these assets for the new company (12,300 on payroll - turnover around DM 500 million) will result in Bölkow having a 70% majority. The latter already held - through Waggon & Maschinenbau - a 25.99% interest in Messerschmidt. The remaining shares are held by the Messerschmidt family, directly (53.34%) and indirectly through Fides Vermögens, Betreuungs- & Verwaltungs GmbH, Munich (20.67%). With a capital of DM 3.2 million, Bölkow, has a consolidated turnover of DM 308 million for 1966, and it is an equal interest of Nord-Aviation SA, Paris (see No 406), The Boeing Co, Seattle, Washington (see No 395), the engineer Ludwig Bölkow and Bölkow Anlagen GmbH, Ottobrunn.

AUTOMOBILES

** KENNINGS SA, Lyons (see No 387) has had its capital of Ff 1 million raised to Ff 2 million by its parent company KENNINGS MOTOR GROUP LTD, Clay Cross, Derby. The Lyons company is concessionaire and importer for BMC-BRITISH MOTOR CORPORATION LTD, Birmingham (Austin, Morris, MG etc) and covers 23 departments in South-East France.

The former Kennings Ltd took its new name when it was recently made into an investment company. It controls some 40 garages in Britain, where it sells petrol for Shell-Mex and BP Ltd (part of The British Petroleum Co Ltd), B.M.C. Cars (95,200 sold in 1966) and spare parts.

BUILDING & CIVIL ENGINEERING

** The Swedish building materials, concrete section and prefabricated dwellings group YTONG A/B, Falköping (see No 334) has backed the reorganisation of the interests of its West German subsidiary, YTONG AG, Munich. This has made over its Uentrop branch, which acquired the assets of MIKORPORIT-WERK UENTROP

GmbH & Co KG, to the newly-formed Rheinisch-Westfälische Ytong GmbH, Uentrop (capital DM 5.5 million). The latter is a wholly-owned subsidiary of WESTDEUTSCHE PORENBETON GmbH, Düsseldorf (capital DM 12 million) itself the joint subsidiary of Ytong AG and Rheinische Kalksteinwerke GmbH, Wulfraht (capital DM 25 million).

The last-named firm is a 65% interest of the AugustThyssen Hütte AG group, Duisburg-Hamborn (32.5% directly and 32.5% through Thyssen Röhrenwerke AG, Düsseldorf) with 25% held by Fried. Krupp, Essen and 10% by Rheinische Stahlwerke, Essen. Ytong AG has DM 18 million capital and its 1966 turnover reached DM 46 million; it is the majority shareholder in Ytong GmbH, Vienna (capital Sch 12 million).

CHEMICALS

** The French company PRIMAGAZ-CIE DES GAZ DE PETROLE SA, Paris (see No 359), has further reorganised its interests in West Germany through the Düsseldorf company INTRAGAS GmbH (capital DM 2.1 million). As a first move, this has acquired complete control of KOSANGAS GmbH, Hamburg, by buying a 25% interest still held by the latter's Danish founder KOSANGAS INTERNATIONAL A/S, Copenhagen. Next Kosangas took over WESER PROPANHANDELS GmbH, Bremen, and raised its capital from DM 2 to 2.2 million, and at the same time its name was changed to PRIMAGAS GmbH. The French company already has some 3,350 sales outlets in North Germany, and the above operation is part of a scheme to extend its interests.

Primagaz (1966 turnover of Ff 180 million) made some 264,000 tons of gas in 1966, and is the second ranking French liquified gas firm after U.R.G. - Utilisation Rationnelle des Gaz SA, Paris, a member of the Royal Dutch Shell group.

** The American company AIR PRODUCTS & CHEMICALS INC, Allentown, Pennsylvania (industrial gas production - see No 403) intends to boost its manufacturing capacity in West Germany. In September of this year it increased the capital of its Düsseldorf subsidiary AIR PRODUCTS GmbH from DM 3 million to 7 million, and it has negotiated the purchase of several sites on which it intends to build new plant.

The American company began to operate its Belgian plant at Selzate earlier this year. Managed by its Brussels subsidiary Air Products SA, this supplies oxygen and nitrogen to the steel works of Sidmar-Siderurgie Maritime SA, Ghent. In this subsidiary it is linked with two Belgian groups Ste Generale de Belgique SA, and Siberka-Ste d'Entreprise & D'Investissements du Beceka SA (20% each).

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

** The Stockholm electrical engineering group AGA A/B (see No 405) which manufactures radios, televisions, gramophones, signalling, navigation, optical and other instruments, has formed an Italian sales subsidiary AGA ITALIA Srl, Cinisello, Balzamo, Milano. Headed by Mr. Amel Birger, Lidingo, Suede, the new company has a capital of Lire 900,000, half of which has been paid up by two Swedes living in Milan, Messrs B. Svinhufvud, and O. Isler.

Aga already has a large number of Common Market subsidiaries based at Courneuve, Seine-St-Denis; Mechelen, Belgium; Amsterdam, Berlin and Hamburg. In Italy it already has a 20% interest in Industria Triestina Gas SpA, Trieste, and Gas Compressi Srl.

** The New York group CHICAGO PNEUMATIC TOOL CO, has backed the formation of a West German sales subsidiary QUALITROL GmbH (capital DM 20,000) whose manager is M. Rene Field, Wiesbaden. The new company is based at Geisenheim, on the premises of an earlier subsidiary Pressluftwerkzeug & Maschinenbau, which was formed by the group in 1919 (capital DM 4.08 million - a 97% interest).

The American company had a 1966 turnover of 150 million, and has over 10,000 persons on its payroll. Its London subsidiary Consolidated Pneumatic Co Ltd, is responsible for the direct control of its Common Market subsidiaries: Chicago Pneumatique SA, Paris; Chicago Pneumatic Tool Co SA, Brussels; and Consolidated Pneumatic Tool Co SpA, Milan, whilst the agent for the Netherlands is Zeevenhoven & Co NV, Rotterdam. Its other British subsidiaries include The Jacobs Manufacturing Co Ltd., and Frank Guylee & Son Ltd, (both of Sheffield). In November 1965 the American group gained control of Qualitrol Corp, Fairport, New York, which makes electrical control instruments.

** With the aim of simplifying its Dutch sales interests, the Berlin group SIEMENS AG (see No 429) has had its subsidiary NEDERLANDSCHE SIEMENS MIJ. NV, La Haye take over CONSTRUCTA WASAUTOMATEN NEDERLAND NV, Amsterdam.

The latter was formed in 1961, is a subsidiary of the domestic appliances manufacturer Constructa Werke GmbH, Düsseldorf (see No 347), another of the group's wholly-owned subsidiaries.

** The American group P. R. MALLORY & CO, Indianapolis, Indiana (see No 431) has acquired from the London company THE EVER READY CO (GREAT BRITAIN) LTD (see No 394) its 37% interest in the French CIE INDUSTRIELLE DES PILES ELECTRIQUES (CIPEL) SA, Levallois-Perret, Hauts-de-Seine (see No 347). The other main shareholders in the latter are Le Carbone-Lorraine SA (a 36.9% interest - an affiliate of the Ugine Kuhlmann SA group - see No 385) and Ste Financiere Electrique SA (a 7.5% interest - a holding company of the Thomson-Houston group - see No 414).

Amongst Cipel's foreign interests are the Italian Sta Il Carbone SpA, Milan (subsidiary of Carbone-Lorraine), the Belgian Cipel-Belgium SA, Molenbeek-St-Jean, as well as sales companies in Spain and Tunisia, and other shareholdings in subsidiaries of Carbone-Lorraine.

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A member of the Stuttgart group ROBERT BOSCH GmbH (see No 423), Robert Bosch (France) SA, Saint-Ouen, Seine-St-Denis, company (capital Ff 25 million) has carried out a further reorganisation of its structure. It has taken over STE IMMOBILIERE 22 VILLIERS SA, St-Ouen, Seine (capital Ff 125,000), and acquired the business interests of SEVART-SA D'EXPLOITATION & DE VENTE D'APPAREILS RADIO & TELEVISION (capital Ff 750,000).

The latter was formed in 1962 as an almost wholly-owned subsidiary of the Zurich holding company Robert Bosch AG, Zurich, and has storage depots in Strasbourg Lyons and Lille.

ELECTRONICS

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The Paris company PRECISION MECANIQUE LABINAL SA (electronic calculators and industrial equipment) has formed a West German sales subsidiary, LABINAL INDUSTRIE-PRODUKTE GmbH, Schmiden (capital DM 100,000), with M. Georges Ardeme as manager.

The founder, whose capital was raised in December 1966 from F 28.29 to Ff 36.78 million, has some 4,000 people employed in its factories in the Paris region (at Saint-Ouen, Clichy, Puteaux and Villetaneuse, as well as at Marcillac-Vallon, Aveyron, Villemur-sur-Tarn, Haute Garonne and Vire, Calvados). In 1965 it sold for Ff 23.6 million its 28.7% interest in LCA-Les Constructeurs Associes SA, Saint-Ouen, to Robert Bosch (France) SA, Chatillon-sous-Bagneux, part of the Robert Bosch GmbH, Stuttgart, group, which has since absorbed the latter company (see No 384).

ENGINEERING & METAL

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The German metal group KORF INDUSTRIE & HANDELS GmbH & CO KG, Kehl (share capital of DM 7 million) is to reorganise around one of its subsidiaries, BADISCHE STAHLWERKE GmbH, Kehl. The capital of this company will be raised to DM 15 from 2 million, and it will absorb three of the group's Kehl subsidiaries: Suddeutsche Drahtverarbeitungswerke GmbH (capital DM 1 million), Sudweststahl GmbH (DM 1 million) and Wikor Maschinenbau (DM 500,000).

The group is headed by Herr Willy Korf, and is currently engaged on two industrial projects: an electronic steelworks is being built in Kehl with 250,000 tons annual capacity, and a planned workforce of 500-750, and in the USA, in Georgetown, a 100,000 ton steelworks is also being put up, as a joint venture with Steelmet International Corp and Western Steel International Corp (see No 432).

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The British company PULSATION CONTROLS (G.B.) LTD, West Drayton, Middlesex, which specialises in control equipment for the petrochemical industry, has opened a West German branch in Dusseldorf under Mr. Peter Gough. Headed by Mr. Ernest Harrington, London, the founder was itself formed in January 1960, with a capital of £10,000.

** The leading British chemical group ICI-IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LTD, London (see No 435), has negotiated an agreement with LURGI GESELLSCHAFT FUER WAERME & CHEMOTECHNIK mbH, Frankfurt, for the exclusive selling rights in West and East Germany, Switzerland and Austria for its "Flocor" effluent treatment, already used in some 30 British plants.

The most recent move of the West German firm - which has five sister companies, headed by the German-Swiss group Metallgesellschaft, Frankfurt - was its backing of the formation of Lurgi Benelux SA (see No 428).

** The West German engineering metallurgical group RHEINISCHE STAHLWERKE, Essen (see No 407), intends to rationalise its manufacturing capacity in the heavy engineering, casting, diesel engines and vehicle assembly sectors by merging two of its subsidiaries, RHEINSTAHL HANOMAG, Hanover-Inden, and RHEINSTAHL HENSCHEL AG, Cassel.

The latter (formerly HENSCHEL WERKE AG) has DM 63 million capital with around 11,000 people on its payroll. Abroad it has interests in Henschel Engineering SA, Antwerp, Henschel Austria GmbH, Vienna, and Henschel South Africa (Pty) Ltd and Wadeville Properties (Pty) Ltd, both in Wadeville, South Africa. Hanomag has a capital of DM 84 million, employs over 14,000 people, and its foreign subsidiaries include Rheinstahl Hanomag Cura SA, Buenos Aires, and Balaj Tempo Ltd, Bombay.

The move now being carried out in West Germany was preceded by the merger in February 1967 of the respective subsidiaries of the two German firms: Ste Francaise Rheinstahl Hanomag Sarl, Levallois-Perret, Hauts-de-Seine, became Hanomag Henschel France when it took over Henschel France SA, Le-Plessis-Robinson, Hauts-de-Seine.

** The London electrical and mechanical engineering concern STURTEVANT ENGINEERING CO LTD (branches in Birmingham, Denton, Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds and Newcastle) has gained control of the French company ETS HELBER SA, Louviers, Eure. The latter, the capital of which was reduced in 1964 from Ff 600 to 540,000 as a result of losses, employs some 100 people in its factory. It makes industrial boilers, air purification and conditioning equipment, as well as general engineering products.

The main interests of the British company are E. Reader & Sons Ltd, Mancuna Engineering Ltd, and Sturtevant Engineering Co (Australasia) Ltd.

** RIJN-SCHELDE MACHINEFABRIEKEN & SCHEEPSWERVEN NV, Breda (see No 410), has decided to merge with MACHINEFABRIEK "BREDA" v/h BACKER & RUEB NV, Breda (see No 301), and will take over the latter.

With a capital of Fl 2.86 million, Breda (an 8% affiliate of the A.K.U.-Allgemene Kuntzjide Unie NV, Arnhem, group) was formed in 1862, and is well-placed in the Dutch engineering and electrical engineering industries. Its range of products includes boilers for the chemical and petrochemical industries, lifts, escalators, packaging machines, measuring and control instruments, as well as high and low tension equipment. In the Netherlands it controls Ieo Transformatorenfabriek NV, Breda, and J. Pool Meet- & Regeltechniek NV, Haarlem (66.6%). Since 1964 it has controlled a manufacturing subsidiary in Belgium in Ghent (see No 264).

** With the aim of strengthening its financial position for expansion, PRAT-DANIEL SA, Rueil-Malmaison, Hauts-de-Seine (see No 380), is soon to exchange shareholdings (see No 428) with three groups to which it is already tied by co-operation agreements. The companies involved will all back the increase in Prat-Daniel's capital, and they are CIE DE PONT-A-MOUSSON, Nancy (see No 433), STE LYONNAISE DES EAUX & DE L'ECLAIRAGE SA, Paris (see No 431), and CIE FINANCIERE DE SUEZ SA, Paris (see No 432). Prat-Daniel has a factory at Gasny, Eure, and had a 1966 turnover of Ff 24 million: $\frac{2}{3}$ came from its air purification and $\frac{1}{3}$ from its water processing activities.

Lyonnaise des Eaux recently took a 10% interest in Degremont SA (see No 427), which also specialises in water processing and where Pont-a-Mousson holds an 11.8% interest. Both of these groups are also linked with Suez in Tunzini-Ameliorair SA, with respective shareholdings of 8, 17 and 10%, which was formed recently through the merger of Tunzini SA and Ameliorair SA, which specialises in air purification.

** The West German manufacturer of office equipment (mainly type-writers and calculating machines) OLYMPIA WERKE AG, Wilhelmsaven (see No 423), has had to abandon the plan to build a factory at Vigo, Spain, of 45,000 units p.a. capacity (85% destined for export markets). A subsidiary had been formed to carry this out in 1965, called Fabrica Olympia de Maquinas de Oficina SA (capital Pts 60 million).

The German company, which has over 14,000 people on its payroll, is the leading concern in its sector in West Germany. It is a wholly-owned interests of the AEG-Telefunken group, which is also carrying out a reorganisation of its Spanish interests (see No 434).

** The holding company FINSIDER SpA (a member of the I.R.I. group - see No 434) has carried out a further reorganisation of its interests. MORTEO SpA, Genoa (capital Lire 700 million), has taken over another engineering company, SOPREFIN-SOC. PREFABBRICATI FINSIDER SpA, Rome (capital Lire 300 million - see No 412), and has changed its own name to MORTEO-SOPREFIN SpA. It will now centralise its interests at Pozzolo Formigaro in a new factory covering 2,000 m² acres. It will employ some 200 workers and be capable of processing 80,000 tons a year, and will mainly produce containers and storage equipment for compressed and liquified gas. The new site will replace Morteo's former manufacturing unit at Genoa, Pegli and Ovara.

** The Rotterdam company MANNESMANN (NEDERLAND) NV, (a member of the West German engineering group MANNESMANN AG, Düsseldorf - see No 428), intends to increase its manufacturing activities, and it has therefore acquired a site at Fijnaart, in North Brabant, on which it will build a factory making metal beams, due to begin operations in 1968. The Dutch company was formed in 1949 with a capital of Fl 1 million, and the 1966 consolidated turnover of the German group reached DM 5.3 million.

** The West German clock manufacturer BLESSING-WERKE KG FEINBAU, Waldkirch, Breisgau, has made a co-operation agreement with the Mexican company INDUSTRIA RELOJERIA MEXICANA SA, Toluca. As a result the latter will begin production of small pendulum and alarm clocks under licence from the German company in early 1968. The Mexican company is already the licensee of the New York group GENERAL TIME CORP (see No 393).

The German company (share capital of DM 3 million) belongs to the Blessing family and employs over 1,000 people. Its annual sales exceed DM 20 million.

** The two West German heavy engineering concerns JOSEPH VOEGELE AG, Mannheim, and FRIEDRICH WILHEM SCHWING GmbH, Wanne-Eickel, who have had CIE GENERALE DES VOITURES SA, Paris (see No 378), as their French representative until now, will in future be represented by the international trading company IMPEX SA, Paris (capital Ff 2,025 million).

With M. Hubert Treuille as president, the latter concern belongs to the Schneider SA group directly (56.1%) and indirectly (21.32%) through the Banque de l'Union Europeenne Industrielle & Financiere SA, Paris (see No 407), in association with Banque Nationale de Paris SA (see No 432) and Banque de l'Union Parisienne - C.F.C.B. SA (see No 410). It controls SECOPA-Ste Europeenne de Courtage & de Participations Sarl, Paris (capital Ff 250,000), which, in association with the Rumanian firm Chimimport, Bucharest, recently formed Ste Franco-Roumaine Pour le Developpement du Commerce de Produits Chimiques De. Co. Fra. Sarl, Paris (see No 425).

Joseph Voegelé (capital DM 6 million) makes concrete production units and truckmixers, and with an annual turnover over DM 60 million, has some 1,700 on its payroll. Friedrich Wilhelm Schwing employs around 400 people and has an annual turnover of around DM 12 million; it makes cranes and concrete pumping equipment.

FINANCE

** DEUTSCHE BANK AG, Frankfurt (see No 419), has negotiated the acquisition of a shareholding in the Brazilian bank INVESTBANCO-BANCO DE INVESTIMENTO & DESENVOLVIMENTO INDUSTRIAL SA, Sao Paulo. Formed in early 1967 (see No 396), with local interests controlling a majority of shares (60%, the Brazilian company, which has a capital of Cruz. 5 million, includes the following founder-shareholders: Credit Lyonnais SA (through its Sao Paulo affiliate Banco Frances & Brasileiro SA), Banca Nazionale del Lavoro SpA, Rome (through its New York subsidiary Italian Economic Corp), Hill, Samuel & Co Ltd, London, Union de Banques Suisses, Zurich, and First National City Bank, New York.

In Latin America the German bank is already represented in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo; the Argentine, Buenos Aires; in Venezuela, Caracas; in Chile, Santiago; and in Mexico, Mexico City. It also has a 0.5% shareholding in the Columbian concern Corporation Financiera Columbiana, Bogota..

** Formed in late 1966 as the result of the merger of VENDOME EQUIPMENT SA and LEASECO-S.L.M.E.SA (formerly LEASECO-FRANCE; name changed after the take over of Ste de Locations de Materiel d'Equipment-S.L.M.E) the French equipment and capital goods leasing concern VENDOME - EQUIPMENT - LEASECO SA (capital Ff 15 million - see No 368) has negotiated the acquisition of the subsidiary VENDOME-EQUIPMENT-TRANSECO - V.E.TRANSECO SA, Paris, which it formed in January 1964 to lease road transport equipment. The latter (capital Ff 500,000) had a turnover of Ff 13.498 million during the first nine months of 1967.

The absorbing company (turnover for first nine months of 1967: Ff 47.796 million has main shareholders: 1) Credit Vendome SA (see No 400), which itself belongs to Cie Financiere de Suez SA (see No 436) with 22.17 %; Union Financiere Pour L'Industrie and L'Energie - Ufiner SA (the holding company of Ste Lyonnaise des Eaux and de L'Eclairage, formed by the take over of U.F.I.SA by Sudener SA (see No 413) 17.9 %; Lebon and Cie Sca (see No 431) also 17.9 %; Ste Generale SA (see No 404) with 3.6 %) and the Emile Segard group (see No 405) with 10 %.

2) The Swiss company Leaseway Intercontinental-Leaseco SA, Zug (see No 324) a member of the American group Leaseway Transportation Corp., Cleveland, Ohio (10 %). 3) Cie Financiere de Suez SA (16.6 %); It has its own shareholdings in Locamo-Ste Pour La Location de Machines-Outils Francaises SA 56 % (see No 335) and in Ste de Gestion de Materiel d'Equipment-Sogebe SA (see No 288). There is also a wholly-owned subsidiary Lomatrans-Ste de Gerance de Biens et de Materiel SA, Paris.

** STE PARISIENNE DE PLACEMENT SA, Paris (see No 348) part of the CHEGARAY group (see this issue) - has taken a 70 % interest in the formation of STE IMMOBILIERE DE LA COLLINE DE SAINT-CLOUD SA (capital Ff 3.5) which intends to build blocks of flats at St-Cloud, Hauts-de-Seine. The new concern is under M. Robert Bremond and its directors include M. Leonard Cohen Geneva (a 5 % interest). Its other shareholders are TRUST FINANCIER & INDUSTRIEL SA Montreux, Vaud (capital Sf 500,000 2.5 %), STE RHODANNIENNE MOBILIERE & IMMOBILIERE POUR LA FRANCE & L'ETRANGER SA, Paris (capital Ff 2.5 million - 5 %) SA D'AMENAGEMENT FONCIER & DE REALISATIONS IMMOBILIERES (5 % - a subsidiary of Cie Financiere de Suez de L'Union Parisienne and S.A.E.-STE AUXILIAIRE D'ENTREPRISES SA, Paris (capital Ff 28 million - 12.5 % - see No 434).

The latter recently reduced to 5.5 % its interest in Ste Auxiliaire de Dragages - S.A.D. Sarl, Port-de-Bouc, Bouches du Rhone (formerly in Paris) - formed on a 50/50 basis with the Dutch company H.A.M. - Hollandasche Aanemijng Mij. NV, The Hague and which has now become an almost wholly-owned interest of another Dutch company, N.O.B.-Nederlandsche Overzee Baggermij. NV, The Hague.

** BANQUE FRANCO-ALLEMANDE SA, Paris, which has just been authorised to open a branch in Strasbourg, intends to extend this move by the opening of offices in Metz and Mulhouse. With a capital of Ff 5 million, the bank is a 50% interest of LANDESBANK & GIROZENTRALE SAAR, Saarbrücken, with the remainder held by DEUTSCHE GIROZENTRALE, Düsseldorf, and 10 provincial West German banks.

** The French finance company STE FRANCAISE DE PLACEMENT SA (capital Ff 14.5 million - see No 348) which is linked to the insurance group LA FORTUNE CIE D'ASSURANCES MARITIMES & TERRESTRES SA Le Havre (see No 412) has negotiated the take over of the investment company STE ALSACIENNE DE GESTION FINANCIERE SA, Paris (interests mainly in shipping - capital Ff 4.26 million). The latter was formed by the decision to make the textile firm SCHEURER LAUTH & CIE SA, Paris into three separate financial companies, the other two being Ste Nouvelle Scheurer Lauth & Cie Sarl (which took over the group's interests in Manufacture D'Impression Scheurer, Lauth & Cie SA, Thann, Haut-Rhin and S.E.T.E.P.-Ste d'Etudes Techniques & de Promotion Sarl).

The La Fortune insurance group is a member of the Chegaray group (see this issue) and in 1965 it took over G.A.P.I.C.-Groupement Auxiliaire de Participations Industrielles & Commerciales SA, Paris, a member of the L'Union des Mines-La Henin SA group (see No 427). Recently its 84.5 % affiliate Seydou-Michau SA was taken over by its 28.6 % affiliate Cie des Docks & Entrepots du Havre SA (both in Paris - see No 361)

** The South African holding company UNION CORPORATION LTD (a 10% affiliate of the London group Charter Consolidated Ltd - see No 419), whose chairman is Mr. T.P. Stratten (see No 379), has formed closer links with the Paris group BANQUE DE L'INDOCHINE SA through the latter's Johannesburg subsidiary FRENCH BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA LTD (see No 432). This company, which will have two new directors to represent Union Corp (Messrs C.B. Anderson, Deputy Managing Director, and A.D. Croad, Secretary and Manager), will become the affiliate of the new investment company French South Africa Holding (Pty) Ltd. With a capital of Rands 1.6 million, the new company is backed equally by the French and South African groups, having paid up its share through local stocks (gold mines and manufacturing companies).

A part of the mining property and other interests of Union Corp are held by a local affiliate U.C. Investments Ltd, Johannesburg, and thus shareholdings outside Africa are controlled by the London Uni Holdings Ltd, which is based on the premises of its own branch (secretary Mr. F.B. Taylor).

** The Dutch transport group BLAAUWHOED NV - which is in the process of merging with the PAKHUISMEESTEREN NV group within the PANKHOED NV holding company (see No 434) - has underwritten half of the increase in capital from Fl 5 to 10 million of EUROWONINGEN NV (subsidiary of the property group Beheermij. "Eurohuis" NV, The Hague - see No 415). The other half of the increase has been covered by BELEGGINSMIJ. UNITAS NV, Rotterdam.

This operation strengthens the existing links between Blaauwhoed and Eurowoningen; these include the property concern PARKFONDS TRUST NV, in which they have respective interests of 47.5% and 5%, with the remainder held by the pension fund Stichting Pensionenfonds der Koninklijke/Shell, The Hague (see No 422).

** Under a co-operation agreement between these two Dutch private banks, FIRMA F. VAN LANSCHOT, 's-Hertogenbosch (see No 432), will take a shareholding in NV v/h FIRMA J. KUYKX BANKIERS, Roosendaal.

Firma F. Van Lanschot, (main shareholders are Messrs. W. CH. J. M. van Lanschot and J. C. van Lanschot) recently strengthened its links with the affiliate Vermeer & Co., Amsterdam (see No 404), which is backed by its own subsidiary Vermeer & Co's Beleggings-Compagnie NV. It has also linked through a reciprocal financial and co-operation agreement with Bankierskantoor Staal & Co, NV, The Hague, wherein it also holds shares. Since 1967 it has been a shareholder in the Swiss company Greyhound Financial & Leasing Corp AG, Zug, a 50% subsidiary of the American transportation group Greyhound Corp, Chicago.

Kuykx has recently been made into a limited company with capital Fl 2 million and has agencies in Dinteloord, Etten, Fijnaart, Goes, Oudenbosch, Steenberg and Zundert.

** FINATOUR SA (president M. Leonard Hentsch) has raised its capital to \$2.76 million, of an authorised total of £4 million. The company was formed in Luxembourg some three years ago (see No 365), as the result of moves by European banks headed by BANQUE DE L'INDOCHINE SA, Paris, and KLEINWORT BENSON LTD, London.

The new increase, which is the fifth, and is worth some \$330,000, has been backed by some of the former shareholders, Banque de l'Indochine, Kleinwort Benson and Hentsch & Cie, Geneva, and by two holding companies, Teribe SA, Panama, and Sominig Inc - Southern Mining & Industrial Corp, Monrovia, Liberia.

** CREDIT MOBILIER INDUSTRIEL SOVAC SA, a member of the international finance association known as the AMSTEL CLUB (and on this basis a shareholder in EUROCARD INTERNATIONAL SA, Burssels - see No 432), has formed a Paris subsidiary called EUROCRAD-FRANCE SA (capital Ff 500,000). This will take over the credit card activities of "Eurocard", which it launched in France over a year ago. "Eurocard" (president M. F. David, headed by M. Gerschel) is a wholly-owned interest of the founder and its Paris hire purchase subsidiary Ste Auxiliaire de Vente & de Credit Savec SA (capital Ff 250,000), which will shortly sell some of their shares in Eurocard International to British and Swedish members thus reducing their interest to about 75%.

** A concentration taking place within the Paris group STE CENTRALE DE BANQUE SA, (main shareholders, Credit Foncier de France SA and Banque de l'Indochine - see No 411) will involve its own subsidiary STE CENTRALE DE PARTICIPATIONS & D'ETUDES SA (former Ste Immobiliere Agricole & Financiere Algerienne-I.F.A. SA).

The latter (capital Ff 2.1 million) will take over three affiliated Paris companies, Ste Mediterranee de Gestion & de Placements SA (capital Ff 1 million), Ste Franco-Venitienne de Participations SA (capital Ff 640,000) and Ste de Gestion d'Interests Mobiliers & Immobiliers SA (capital Ff 100,000).

** A simplification of the internal organisation of the Paris banking and financial group MM. RIVAUD & CIE Snc (see No 429) will result in the investment company MINES DE KALI SAINTE-THERESE SA, Paris (see No 425), taking over UNION DE TITRES & DE PARTICIPATIONS SA, Djibouti. The main shareholders of the latter are La Forestiere Equatoriale SA, Abidjan, Ste Africaine Forestiere & Agricole SAFA, Djibouti, Ste Generale Francaise de Transports & d'Entreprises SA, Paris (see No 319), Comptoir Lyonnais, Louyot & Cie SA, Paris (see No 410), Ste des Ciments Francais SA, Cuerville, Yvelines - which recently took over Ste des Matériaux de Construction de la Loir-et-Cher SA, Paris (see No 402) - Ste des Plantations des Terres Rouges SA, Djibouti, Banque de l'Indochine SA, Paris (see No 436), etc...

** After gaining a 51% holding in the Munich merchant bank, BAYERISCHE WIRTSCHAFTSBANK AG (capital DM 5 million - see No 405), the Hamburg private bank, C. H. J. SIEMERS & CO KG has sold back a large part of it to the industrialist Heinrich Thorbecke of Kelkheim, Taunus. The balance is shared between Messrs Hanns Maier (33%) and Rudolf Bucherl (16%).

FOOD & DRINK

** The Belgian company CREPARTI-STE DE CREDIT & DE PARTICIPATION S.C., Louvain (headed by MM Andre de Spoelbergh, Londerzeel, and Paul Schauer, Brussels) has formed a new company called SUN FLAVOURS INTERNATIONAL NV, Louvain, with a capital of Bf 1 million. This will trade in and market alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks based on syrups and concentrates, whether from animal, vegetable or mineral origin.

** The merger, agreed in principle in May 1967 (see No 408) between STE INDUSTRIELLE DES RAFFINERIES DE SUCRE DE SAINT-LOUIS SA, Marseilles, STE DES SUCRERIES & RAFFINERIES BOUCHON-PAJOT SA, Nassandres, Eure, and CIE NOUVELLE DES SUCRERIES REUNIES SA, Paris is now taking place. The three companies involved, which will now become investment companies, will however, keep some interests in the agricultural production sector.

** The Belgian traders and brokers in agricultural produce and fatty substances, STE INTERNATIONALE DE PRODUITS AGRICOLES & ALIMENTAIRES-SIPA SA, Uccle, Brussels, has opened a London office under Mr. Michael S. King, with M. J. Krelman as president. Formed late in 1961, SIPA is a direct interest of the Swiss holding company AGRALIMENTA AG, Zug, which is headed by M. A. Rickbach, Zurich.

** The Antwerp canning concern TOCOFRU SA, (fruit, vegetable, fish and meat), which is run by M. and Madame Themar, has formed its first Common Market subsidiary in Rotterdam, NV TOCOFRU-NEDERLAND. With a capital of Fl 50, Fl 50,000, and with M. Adolphe A. Ghemar as manager, this will trade in and import/export fresh food products.

FOOD & DRINK

** The London CEREBOS LTD group (foodstuffs - see No 383), further to its French reorganisation scheme, is making over its interests in the prepared meals sector (gross assets of Ff 49.35 million) to a subsidiary CEREBOS ALIMENTAIRE SA (capital Ff 15 million) now being formed at La Courneuve, Seine-St-Denis (see No 386).

This will take over three firms acquired by the group in 1965 (see No 304 and 365): 1) ETIVAL & ROBERT LE GLOUANNEC SA, La Courneuve (capital raised in September 1967 to F 6.27 million following the consolidation of debts owed by Cerebos SA worth F 3 million; 2) ETS SENCHOU FRERES SA, Casseneuil, Lot-et-Garonne (capital Ff 7.5 million and gross assets worth Ff 20.61 million; SA MUTHULAR, Sauveterre-de-Bearn (capital Ff 1 million and gross assets worth Ff 10.29 million).

The other French interests of the British group include Salines Cerebos SA (formerly Salines de Dombasle SA - capital Ff 3.6 million) and Cerebos SA, La Courneuve which is both an investment and sales company for food products - with the exception of salt (capital raised in July 1967 to Ff 16.75 million).

OIL, GAS & PETROCHEMICALS

** The STANDARD OIL CO OF NEW JERSEY (see No 423) and ROYAL DUTCH SHELL (see No 422), which each have a 25% interest in the natural gas deposits at Groningen, intend to link to distribute natural gas in Southern Germany. They are negotiating the formation of a company in which they will each have a 25% share held through their West German subsidiaries, with the remainder shared by four West German concerns: SAAR FERGAS AG, Saarbrücken (capital DM 30 million); GAS-UNION GmbH, Frankfurt (capital DM 44 million); GASVERSORGUNG SUDDEUTSCHLAND GmbH, Stuttgart (capital DM 60 million) and BAYERISCHE FERGAS GmbH, Munich (capital DM 2.1 million).

Saar Ferngas's main shareholders include Saarbergwerke AG, Saarbrücken, and Gas de France, Paris (respectively 21% and 10%). The three other firms belong to local municipalities, and Gasversorgung Suddeutschland is also an interest of the Länder of Baden-Württemberg (acquired in 1966 in return for financial support - see No 377).

The American and Anglo-Dutch oil groups also have a major option on the distribution of Groningen gas in West Germany to the Ruhr through their joint shareholdings in Thyssengas AG, Duisburg-Hamborn and Ruhrgas AG, Essen. Together they hold 50% in the former, and more than 25% in the second.

** STOOMVAART MIJ, "NEDERLAND", Hilversum (see No 401 - a member of the Amsterdam group NEDERLANDSCHE SCHEEPVAART UNIE NV) has linked on a 20% basis with the American group UNION OIL CO OF CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles, California (see No 389) to form UNION OIL CO OF THE NETHERLANDS which will carry out oil and natural gas prospection on the Dutch North Sea shelf.

This is the first move by the Dutch firm towards diversifying its interests outside the transport sector, where it already has some twenty shareholdings. These include companies involved in supplying drilling-rigs: NV Ned Ce. Bevoorradsbasis "Octopus", Amsterdam which it controls 50/50 with Ned. Kok- & Scheepsbouwmij. N.D.S.M. Amsterdam (see No 428) a joint subsidiary of the shipyard Ned. Dok. Mij. NV and NV Ned. Scheepsbouwmij, Smit-Lloyd NV, Rotterdam (see No 290) in which it has a 30% interest and where the remainder is held by L. Smit & Co's and Koninklijke Rotterdamsche Lloyd NV (both based in Rotterdam). The latter is also a member of the Nederlandsche Scheepvaart Unie group, and it controls the Rotterdam company Damco Scheepvaart Mij, which has recently become a 20% affiliate of the Wm. H. Müller & Co NV group (see No 421).

The American group, whose previous European interests were limited to Union Oil Co of Spain and Unoco Trading Co Ltd, Liechtenstein. Today it is the tenth ranking American oil company, with a 1966 turnover of \$1,400 million. It produces around 12.5 million tons of crude annually and around 13,000 m3 of natural gas. Its main refineries are in the United States and there is a research institute in California. It also has two petrochemical complexes, and eight tankers carry oil from Iran, Venezuela, Alaska, and the off-shore fields of California and the Gulf of Mexico.

PAPER

** Sales in Austria of cellulose kraft and card products made in Hamburg by DEUTSCHE DUNI GmbH, and in Sweden by its parent company A/B BILLINGSFORS LANGED, Billingsfors (see No 362), will now be handled by DUNI PAPIER-HANDELS GmbH, Vienna which has been formed with a capital of Sch 100,000. The manager of the new concern is Herr Rolf Glemstedt, Hamburg.

The Swedish company, which belongs to the Stockholm group Bonnierforetagen A/B, (it is headed by Grafoprint A/B, Stockholm) also controls Duni International SA, Neuilly, Hauts-de-Seine (capital Ff 2 million), which was formed in 1960 as Duni-France.

PLASTICS

** Formed in Zurich in 1929 by the Swedish A/B LINOLEUM FORSHAGA, Göthenburg, the Dutch NV NEDERLANDSCHE LINOLEUM-FABRIK, Krommenie, the Swiss LINOLEUM AG, Giubiasco, Ticino, and by a German company which has since withdrawn, the holding company CONTINENTALE LINOLEUM-UNION AG (see No 392) has strengthened the links between its founders through the formation of a joint "European" board.

Based in Zurich, this will co-ordinate the production of linoleum, floor tiles and carpets, as well as the development of new products and sales policies. The

members of the new board are Messrs S. E. Ljungreen, C. H. Kaars Sijpesteijn and R. Zoelly, respectively directors of the companies Forshaga, Nederlandsche Linoleum-fabriek and Linoleum AG. Continentale Linoleum-Union directly controls the French company Ste Industrielle Remoise du Linoleum-Sarlino SA, Rheims.

** The Anglo-Dutch group, UNILEVER LTD, London and The Hague, is at present negotiating for two (30% and 20%) holdings in CHEMICAL & INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT LTD, London in order to gain absolute control of the concern. These shares are held by M. M. J. Pomeraniec (30%), chairman of the plastics processing group, Commercial Plastics Industries Ltd., London and by the Hambros Bank Ltd., London (20%), through its subsidiaries Hambros Investment Co. AG., Zurich and Bentworth Trust Europa Holding NV., Amsterdam. The negotiations in fact concern Commercial Plastics Industries itself, Unilever and the Hambros Bank having gained control in February 1964 and formed a portfolio company for its direction called Chemical & Industrial Investment (capital £500,000).

Commercial Plastics, whose new director will be Mr. P. M.V. Egon, has a score of subsidiaries in the United Kingdom. On the Continent, its interests are mainly in the Six: 1) in the Netherlands, Commercial Plastics Boekelo NV, Boekelo (formerly Boekelo Plastics) which has a payroll of some 270 and specialises in "Fablon" polythene adhesive sheeting and vinyl products (brand name "Boeklon"): the latter firm was set up by the British group on a 50-50 basis with one of its local subsidiaries, Boekelo'sche Stoombleekerij. NV., Enschede; when this firm fell into the hands of the holding company Texoprint NV., Helmond (see No 431) - affiliate of the Unilever and Kon. Textielfabrieken Nijverdaal-Ten-Caate NV, groups - Boekelo was made the wholly-owned subsidiary of the group. Boekelo in turn controls Commercial Plastics Holland NV, at Boekelo (previously Commercial Plastics Holland NV, Amsterdam), which acts at one and the same time as a sales subsidiary and a portfolio company for it; 2) in France the sales company, Commercial Plastics France SA, Montreuil, Seine-St-Denis (capital recently increased to Ff 600,000) and 3) in Belgium the sales company Commercial Plastics Belgium SA, Brussels, both directly affiliated to Boekelo; 4) in West Germany the sales company Commercial Plastics Deutschland GmbH, Cologne.

PRINTING & PUBLISHING

** The Paris publishers FASQUELLE EDITEURS SA (capital Ff 124,000) is to take over another firm the same sector with whom it has had a sales link-up for the past few years EDITIONS BERNARD GRASSET SA (capital Ff 68,000). Fasquelle will raise its capital as a result of this move.

TEXTILES

** The German-Swiss firm J. SCHIESSER GmbH, Radolfzel, Bodensee (underclothes and lingerie), has acquired control of the West German knitwear concern GOETTINGER STRICK- & WARENFABRIK GmbH, Göttingen. The latter, which has some 400 people on its payroll, was until now owned by Herr Albert Bode.

Schiesser, which employs some 4,800 people, has several foreign interests (see No 399). Its most recently formed subsidiary is Schiesser International Srl, Milan (see No 401), which is directly controlled by the Swiss company Schiesser Holding AG, Zurich.

TRADE

** The German mail order group, NECKERMANN VERSAND KGaA, Frankfurt (see No 419), has opened up a Milan branch under the name of NECKERMANN ITALIANA-UFFICIO ACQUISTI DELLA NECKERMANN VERSAND under the direction of Sig. Bertozzei of Cinisello, Milan.

The German group, in which the international holding company GENERAL SHOPPING SA of Luxembourg has a 4.7% holding, is the second biggest in its field in West Germany (after GrossversandHaus Quelle Gustav Schickedanz KG, Furth); it has an annual turnover of around DM 1,300 million. Its insurance subsidiary, Neckura-Neckermann Versicherungs AG, Frankfurt, has had a 30% holding in the Italian concern C.A.I.-CIA DI ASSICURAZIONE ITALIANA SpA, Rome, since the beginning of 1966 (see No 344).

TRANSPORT

** Set up in August 1967 in Rotterdam as a subsidiary of the Irish shipping company BELL LINE LTD, Dublin (see No 425), BELL LIJN NV (capital Fl 500,000) has put up 45% of the capital for the Bell Transport NV company. With an authorised capital of Ff 100,000, of which 50% is paid up, this firm will be concerned with the transportation of all types of goods. Its other founder companies, which provided 45% and 10% of the capital respectively, are the Dutch companies NV Goeder- envervoer Goedkoop & de Geus and Gebr. van Weelde Transport NV, both of Rotterdam.

Bell Line Ltd is a member of the Irish group GEORGE BELL GROUP OF SHIPPING & TRANSPORT COMPANIES LTD, Dublin, which is directed by Mr. George Hollwey, and is on an equal footing in the group with its sister company Bellferry Ltd. The group operates a container shipping system in the Irish Sea and between the Continent and the United Kingdom; it owns loading and unloading installations for containers at Rozenburg Europoort at Rotterdam; Waterford, Ireland; Teesport, Middlesbrough, and Bellport, Wales.

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** The Dutch shipping agency TACOMA NV, Rotterdam (formed in 1966 - capital Fl 100,000), has opened a British branch at Wirral, Cheshire. This will be headed by Mr. K. R. Hills.

VARIOUS

** Headed by M. Lucien Tissot-Dupont, the French manufacturer of high quality gold and silver lighters and other smokers' requisites, S. T. DUPONT SA, Paris (see No 388), has formed S. T. DUPONT LTD, London (capital £100), to represent its sales interests in Britain.

 The French firm (capital Ff 4 million) has a factory at Faverges, Haute-Savoie. For the past year its Italian interests have been represented by S. T. Dupont Srl, Milan.

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